

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-29 remain pending in the present application.

Applicant's amendments to the claims have obviated the need to amend the drawings. References to a "controller" or to an "external control device" have been deleted.

Independent claims 1, 10 and 20 recite limitations not disclosed by, nor made obvious in view of, the prior art. For example, a specific arrangement of plugs or "ports" (i.e., connectors) is recited where the ports are "arranged in two rows, one row along each of two lengthwise edges of the board, wherein a coupling direction of the ports is outward from the board". Such an arrangement is illustrated in Fig. 5 which shows plugs 50 arranged along the lengthwise edges of board 25. The plugs are mounted to the board so that their engaging portion 53 provides a coupling direction that is outward, or away from, the board.

This connector arrangement causes disk drives, when mated to the connectors, to be "arranged in rows with component sides of the storage devices facing away from each other and with non-component sides of the storage devices facing each other". "Component side" is defined in the popular literature so that the edge of a disk drive with a connector is also the edge of the component side – i.e., the side of the drive where the electronics are located. See, for example, the document provided with this Amendment entitled "Acer Peripherals" at Figure 4. Also, compare the Acer Peripheral views of Figure 4 that shows the component side (bottom) with Figures 1-3 which show the connectors. The Acer Peripherals document can be found at <http://www.acersupport.com/ess/html/st34371.html>. Many other documents showing can be easily discovered from a search on the Internet.


Note that these limitations are not shown by Fairchild or the prior art. Fairchild positions three drives in the same orientation so that the non-component sides are all facing upwards (and are not adjacent) as shown in, for example, Fairchild's Fig. 3. Also, Fairchild does not disclose two rows of ports with the ports arranged "along each of

two lengthwise edges of the board” since each “board” in Fairchild includes three connectors that essentially cover the small board (see, e.g., Fairchild’s Fig. 4).

Accordingly, the present claims are in condition for allowance and Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-279-5098.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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